

## Prouds master clock at Kingaroy first report.

A chance conversation with Jim Blyth, who is responsible for maintenance of the Synchronome master and slave clocks at the Kingaroy Court House and the Nanango Shire Offices, led Norm Heckenberg, Greg Baker and Tony Roberts to visit Kingaroy to study the electromechanical tower clock which was originally installed in the Kingaroy School of Arts in 1918.



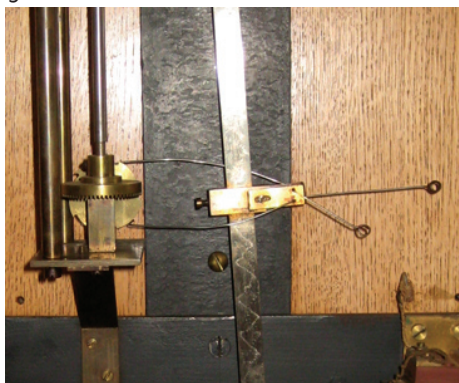
The clock drove three, four foot dials in the cupola of the School of Arts and was removed from the building when it was demolished in 1967. The clock was restored by the local Rotary Club and placed in an imposing glass display case in the Kingaroy Town Hall. The display case incorporates the electromechanical movement, drive work and a new chain drive to the motion work driving the original hands behind a painted four foot dial. It remained there for 35 plus years before being relocated about four years ago to the Kingaroy Heritage Museum. The clock has not run for many years. Norm and I decided that we would assist Jim and the Heritage Museum who wanted to return the clock to working order. The clock movement was intact and missing only the chain which drives the motion work within the display case.



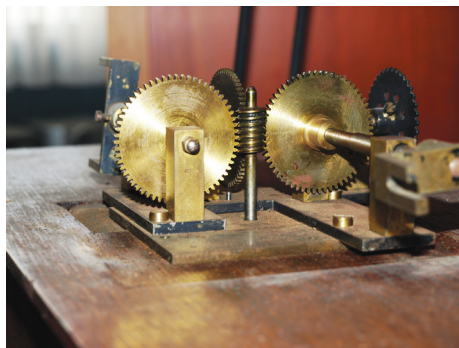
Tony eagerly assisted by Museum staff

A letter and a few emails later the local council agreed to the restoration and to pay for our travel etc and we would provide the labour at no cost.

This tower clock is a very early Prouds of Sydney electromechanical tower clock movement and is similar to the movements in three tower clocks installed at the Circular Quay ferry wharves in 1915. Thomas Murday from England was then in charge of Prouds Electric Clock and Scientific Instrument Department. His trademark and patented ratchet and two pawl mechanism is evident in this clock along with his unusual worm drive system to the three dials. Pictures of this type of clock survive, but this is the only movement which has been located and it was wonderful to see it preserved in such good condition.



Murdays Ratchet and double pawl mechanism



Murdays Worm Drive Work to the Dials

The story behind the clock installation of this clock is not without some drama. It was dedicated to the memory of Archibald

Blue. As we learned from Museum Curator Maria Thoumine, Blue was the first editor (from 1906) and manager of the Kingaroy Herald and Burnett Advocate, a journalist of repute and heavily involved in local activities, including the School of Arts, which was a centre of leisure and culture in the town.

His death was reported in the Melbourne Argus (Monday 9 October 1916, page 8) on a page filled with reports of protests and demonstrations against and in favour of conscription of men to serve overseas in the Great War. The first referendum bill had been passed on September 21, and mandatory registration and enrolment had commenced. By October 5 The Age reported that of 11607 men examined, 4581 were found fit, approximately 40 per cent.

Blue had used his paper to accuse local barber, Adolf Hoffman, who was of German origin, of treacherously distributing leaflets calling for an anti-conscription vote in the referendum to be held on October 28.

### NEWSPAPER PROPRIETOR'S DEATH:

KINGAROY (Q.), Sunday, - Mr. Archibald Blue, the proprietor of the local newspaper, the "Herald," died today. In last Friday's issue of his paper, Mr Blue accused a local barber, who is of German nationality, with circulating anti-conscription literature. The two men met on Saturday afternoon, when it is alleged that angry words led to blows, and as a result Adolph Hoffman has been arrested.

We don't know if Hoffman was subsequently found guilty. History tells us that the referendum was held on 28 October 1916 and lost, as was a second one in 1917.

Tony and Norman have now been



to Kingaroy a second time and had the clock going with some temporary repairs. Restoration work to date includes rebuilding the insulation of the contact block along with alignment of the contacts and the manufacture of a new toggle to the design used by Prouds in their early clocks. They have brought more parts back to Brisbane for cleaning and maintenance. They hope to have everything running again by the end of October.



Tony and Norm discuss the project with the Museum Curator, Maria Thoumine prior to the restoration initiation

The Museum holds the three cast iron clock dials, two with some of the original opal glass held in store and the third has been set into the concrete walkway in the Arts and Heritage Precinct forecourt. The location of the other two sets of hands and associated motion work is unknown. In the photo the words PROUDS Ltd ELECTRIC SYDNEY can be seen on the centre opal glass panel.



Tony and Norm holding an original dial

Entry to the museum is free and there is a tourist information centre alongside, so if you are in Kingaroy, call in for a look. Both are housed in the old Kingaroy Power House located at 128 Haly St, Kingaroy Queensland, phone 07 4162 6272.

Compiled by Norman Heckenberg & Tony Roberts.



### Another great public clock for these pages.

The World of Interiors - October 2009 The 150th Anniversary of Big Ben is to be celebrated throughout 2009 and I've just heard about it! For further information call UK 020 7219 4272 or visit [www.bigben.parliament.uk](http://www.bigben.parliament.uk)

Terrific visuals by Christopher Simon Sykes, text by Timothy Brittain-Catlin. Condé Nast Publications Limited, London. Malcolm Enright - Editor.

### A few thoughts.

If you havent supplied an internet address, please do so? I would like to remind members of some of the advantages; frequently information such as notices of special meetings, special auctions, and items wanted or for sale, meeting notices, agendas and minutes of meetings, newsletters from other Chapters etc. are all effectively distributed by email in a timely manner.

A new Chapter year is approaching rapidly. All Committee positions will be declared vacant and you are encouraged to participate in the administration of the Chapter. The Chapter always needs new people coming forward to participate with the administration. Perhaps you are uncertain just how you could help. Have a chat with the President or any member of the committee. People do age and get other interests and it is essential that the Chapter continue to have new members joining the committee. Apart from the usual administrative roles two important rolls that will need filling are that of workshop coordinator and assistant coordinator. If you think that you may be able to help mention it to the President.

At the special workshop in September considerable interest was displayed in battery, electric and motor driven clocks and it was resolved that we would form special

interests group for this growing field of interest. Immediately it became obvious that prior to attempting the repair and conservation of clocks members of the group would require some degree of electrical knowledge. Lindsay Bramall offered support sending us the notes that Chapter 72 had used when they set up an electric horology group and naturally we were happy to accept this generous offer. At the last workshop it was decided that initially the group would focus exclusively on the teaching of basic electricity and magnetism, prior to attempting and conservation of clocks. Norman Heckenberg has agreed to head the special interest group and will present further information regarding the formation of this group at the Workshop meeting 17 Jan 2010.

Norman will discuss planning during the day and make the new group the topic of his lunch time talk. Some specialized electrical instruments and tools will be required and Norman will outline all this in January 2010. IMPORTANT: - No mains operated clocks will be included, it is illegal for unlicensed people to work on mains operated clocks or equipment.

I take this opportunity to wish you the compliments of the Christmas season and look forward to seeing you at the Christmas Lunch.

Paul Hutchinson - Secretary.